

408 8th Street, N.W. (National Art
and Frame Company)
Washington, D.C.

HABS No. DC-517

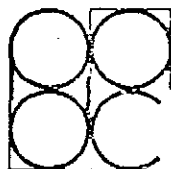
HABS
DC,
WASH,
286-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HABS
DC,
WASH,
286-



PENNSYLVANIA
AVENUE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

425 13TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS

ANDERSON, NOTTER, MARIANI
GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT

DEBROUX & PURNELL
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS

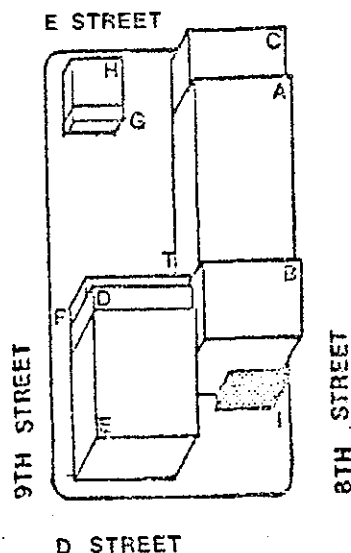
DAVID McLAREN, HART & ASSOCIATES
PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT

MONK, DUNSTONE, ASSOCIATES
COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

BUILDING DOCUMENTATION

National Art and Frame Company
408 Eighth Street, NW
Lot 811



This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 407, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 407, see HABS No. DC-516.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The National Art and Frame Company is situated on Eighth Street between D and E Streets. Occupying a rectangular lot twenty-six feet wide by fifty feet deep, this Nineteenth Century two-story building is constructed against a towering commercial warehouse to the north and exposed to a vacant corner lot to the south which absorbed a service alley originally adjacent to this structure. No original construction permit is available; however, an 1887 Washington District plat map confirms the building's existence on that date.

The building features a typical wood floor-framing system spanning between brick party walls. The roof is flat, with a marked pitch to the rear or west.

On the facade, the storefront of this brick structure has undergone considerable alteration. It now consists of a recessed entryway segregating the show-window organization into a two-and-one cluster. It is supported by ceramic tile-clad plinth and features an aluminum fascia above the glazed areas. Highlighting the second level is a tripartite window assemblage. The central window opening is approximately three feet wider than its flanking ones. Each window is crowned with segmental brick arch devoid of ornamentation. The top of the facade features a classical cornice.

The rear wall is brick, now sprayed with cement. Each level has two segmentally-arched windows. Only one of the whole is proportionally inharmonious: resting on a sill lower than its neighbor, the first floor south window has a more slender vertical proportion than all others. This and cracks on the cement plaster lead us to believe that it was originally a door that provided service access from the no longer existing alley.

The interior spatial configuration at the first story is determined by one large area, sub-divided by approximately one-fifth at the rear. The larger room is used as a workspace and showroom gallery. No original finishes are present on this level.

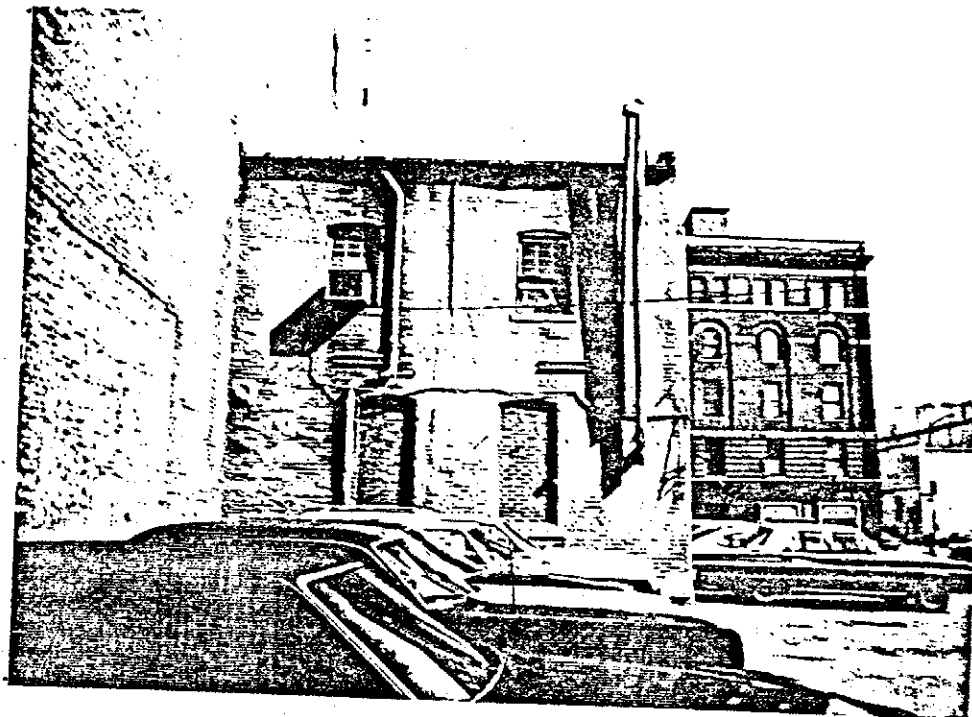
An independent entrance to the left of the main entry gives access to the upper story. The space there is used as a workshop and storage area. A centrally-placed roof skylight offers illumination for the entire working space.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Originally a simple, functional building with no architectural merit, this structure must have acted as a neutral element in the more visually active cityscape that once surrounded it. With the disappearance of the latter element, the value of this building has been totally diminished in terms of a contribution to the improvement of urban aesthetics.



EIGHTH STREET FACADE (EAST)



WEST OR REAR ELEVATION

Lot 18 (Sublots 810, 811)
408-416 8th Street

The 1872 Bastert plat map reveals Lot 18 as "L-shaped", located in a lower, eastern quadrant of the square. By 1887 the property had been internally subdivided, east-west. A 1907 building permit indicated the construction of a structure at 410-412 8th Street, thus joining part of Lot 18 with Lot 17, to the north (Building Permit #1002, 9/21/1907).

1819.....William McMurray owned Lot 18.

1824.....McMurray's assessment was \$573.00 (lot), \$700.00 (improvements).

1829/33...The lot assessment increased to \$611.00.

1840/43...\$765.00 was McMurray's value of improvements.

After this record, Lot 18 has a northern (26' frontage) and southern (25' frontage) listing.

Lot 18 South (Sublot 811)
408 8th Street

1859.....Thomas McGuire was assessed \$1,125.00 (lot).

1870.....The improvement value was \$500.00.

1877

to

1918.....Carpenters, builders, painters and horseshoers predominated at 408 8th Street.

1878/79...McGuire's lot assessment was increased to \$1,875.00.

1883/84...\$1,438.00 was McGuire's lot value.

1893/94...The title was transferred to Ernest Burgdorf. The assessment was \$3,375.00 (lot) and \$300.00 (improvements).

1899/

1900.....Robert A. Dove owned the southern property. No lot assessment was recorded. Dove, a horseshoer, was listed in the City Directories, 1899 to 1903 (Dove & Thompson), 1907 to 1913 (Dove & Gussman), 1915 to 1917.

1915.....An April 3 Building Permit (#3876) to Robert A. Dove, 408 8th Street: Permission to install a cement floor and fireproof ceiling in first story with two inches of approved fireproof material. Cost: \$300.00.

1918.....Building Permit #127, July 10, was issued to Robert A. Dove: Repair front door and stairs; fireproof ceiling and area around stairs; cement floor of building. Cost: \$200.00. Contractor: T.V. Thompson.

1931.....Permission was granted to tear down and rebuild rear wall (note: there existed condemnation proceedings on the building). (Building Permit #143,765, 6/16/1931; Owner: David S. Stanley.) Louis R. Wihemiller's auto repair shop was listed in the City Directories, 1930 to 1932.

1945.....An April 16 Building Permit (#277,021) was issued to Nontz Greenberg: Permission to do repairs; remove old plaster ceiling and fitting on new ceiling. Cost: \$2,000.00. Architect: American Building Cleaning Contractors.

1956

to

1960.....The building was occupied by a shoe repair enterprise.

1967

to

1981.....National Art and Frame has been listed in the City Directories at 408
8th Street.

SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas

Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps

Boyd's City Directories

District of Columbia Building Permits

District of Columbia General Assessment Records

District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records

District of Columbia Tax Records

Hopkins Real Estate Atlas

Polk's City Directories

Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment
Land Agency

Sanborn Insurance Map

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

408 Eighth Street
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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE	COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY
Washington, D.C.		
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME)		HABS NO.
none		DC-517
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
National Art and Frame Company (tenant)		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES)		
408 8th Street, N.W.		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE)		ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)
perhaps as early as 1848 (1848 Tax Book)		none known
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE)		
Building lacks any architectural detailing or historical association that would make it significant. It apparently dates to 1848 when the tax book shows a structure built by Thomas McGuire, blacksmith.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
none		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)		
brick walls with wood floor-framing system. Side wall stuccoed.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)		
Approximately twenty-six feet wide by fifty deep deep, it is a two story structure.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
Second floor front windows have segmental arches.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
none. First floor and second floor rooms have been extensively altered and retain no interesting features (if they ever had any). Second story skylight.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES		
height increased by three feet (1902), show windows installed (1906), Mosaic tiles on exterior front done sometime after installation of show windows. Second story sign added sometime after 1964.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE		
Fair, vacant		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
none		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.)		
PADS SURVEY (November 1980) by Anderson Notter/Mariani, David McLaren Hart & Associates N'T TEAR IT DOWN SURVEY (April 1980) by Lilyan Sobel and Sally Wages		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION		DATE
Bill Lebovich, consultant to Square 407 Limited Partnership		May 31, 1989